

Ewá / Yewá: The Orisha of Beauty and Divination

Every deity in the Orisha pantheon holds significant importance. They govern various aspects of life and nature. Their roles range from controlling elements like fire or water to overseeing human activities such as agriculture or warfare.

Ewá, also known as **Yewá**, is a revered Orisha in Nagô and Egun culture, symbolizing beauty, mystery, love, and transformation. She represents beauty, mystery, love, and transformation in the Orisha pantheon. She is known for her sensitivity to all senses and is considered the Orisha of clairvoyance. Despite her beauty, **Ewá** kept herself chaste, and she is the protector of all things pure and virgin, including humans, rivers, and forests. Depicted as a young huntress with bird features, she has mastery over air, birds, and divination practices.

Ewá carries the eggun (souls of our ancestors) **Obatala's lineage** to this world. **Yewá**, "The first light lítà òòrùn" (**akókó imole**) to appear in this world we call **Ayé** in Nagô, she is called **Ayinōn** by the **Egun**.

Oduduwa is the primordial goddess of the earth and creation, associated with the creation of humanity. She is the Goddess of mud, marshes, and the earth, and is known as **Yewá "The Great Mother"** or **Yewájòbí**, "The Mother of All" **Odùduwà**.

Ewá is worshiped in Umbanda and Candomblé, with a significant presence in Nigeria, where the **Yewá River** is named after her. **Ewá**'s other titles include:

- **Ewá Fagemy** – Lady of the Rainbows (linked to Osha'nlá ò.dú.wā).
- **Ewá Bami** – Owner of the precious stones (linked to **Òsanyìn**).
- **Ewá Salamim** – Lady of the woods and warrior (linked to Odé, Orisha Oko).
- **Ewá Gebeuyin** – Bluish serpent in storms (linked to Oya, Babalú-Ayé).
- **Ewá Awo** – Lady of the cowry (linked to Oya, **Òsanyìn**).
- **Ewá Gyran** "Knowledge" – Lady of the solar rays (linked to Babalú-Ayé and Osoosi).

Ewá manifests in life as virginal, representing purity, and will not tolerate any misbehavior. She is a fearless woman associated with fertility, beauty, love, and fresh water. As a fertility deity, she plays an important role in procreation, and couples having fertility issues often turn to her for help. She embodies the ideal womanhood in Yoruba culture, where chastity and purity are highly valued.

As an Orisha of rivers and lakes, signifying life-giving properties, she represents fertility and abundance. In the Caribbean, **Yewá** is a warrior Orisha of fertility, chastity, loneliness, and death.

There are several origin stories for **Yewá**, also known as **Yeggua**, **Yegua**, **Iewa**, **Awa**, éléwà, èwà òràsà, **Igala**: ègwà and **Igbo**: àgwà. **Yewá** has several praise names, but one famous one is **Yewá Agbo dūdū** (Yewá the black ram). The **Yewá River** is also known by different names: **Yewátō**, **Nonhoué tō** by the **Egun**, **Laguna** by the Spanish, **Lagune de Porto-Novo** by the French and German, and **Lagoon** by the English. The Egba odo Crown Obas and Princes chose to rename themselves the "Yewá" after the river. The **Yewá people**, primarily agriculturalists, carpenters, builders, smiths, artisans, and textile processors, inhabit regions such as Ogun State, Ado-Odo/

Ota, Ipokia, Yewa South, Yewa North, Imeko Afon, part of Abeokuta North, Porto-Novo (modern Benin), and a few in Togo and Ghana. **Ewaen** means **Wisdom** in Edo-bini dialect.

In Nagô, "**Ewá**" means beauty. The term "**duduwa**" comes from "**dudu ewa**" (Black Beauty). **Ebony** in English is also a way of celebrating **Ewá's** Black Beauty, comparing it to ebony, a precious dark wood with deep, rich **hues**.

- **Beauty in Nago:** ẹwa
- **Beauty Queen:** ẹwa Ayaba
- **Sunshine:** ẹwa Orun
- **Black Beauty:** Dudu ẹwa
- **Charms:** ẹwa
- **Beans:** ẹwa
- **Peas:** ẹwa
- **Natural beauty:** adayeba ẹwa

"**Awo**" in Nago also means color, as in "**awọn awo**" (colors). Awo also signifies the nature and essence of secrecy in Nago religious traditions. She or he who know the secret of odu is the "**Babalawo**") Master of the mysticism.

In Nago numerical:

- **Cardinal:** ẹwá
- **Counting:** ẹ́wàá
- **Adjectival:** méwàá
- **Ordinal:** kewàá
- **Adverbial:** ẹ́mewàá
- **Distributive:** méwàá méwàá
- **Collective:** méwè́wàá
- **Fractional:** ìdáméwàá

The number ten in other languages:

- **Egun (Gun):** Awó
- **Nago/Yoruba:** Mewa
- **Haussa:** Goma
- **Hebrew:** ‘ăśśārā
- **Fula:** Naan or Sappo
- **Shona/Bantu:** Gumi
- **Greek:** déka, déca

The word "**decibel**" comes from the Latin word **decima**, meaning "tenth."

Decalogue from the Latin is **decalogus**, from the **ancient Greek dekálogos** means **Ten** (10) Commandments.

Odu Ifa Osa Meji takes the **10th** position in the order of the 16 major Odu Ifa. **Osa Meji** is an Odu of **Iyami** or **Eleye**, the "Royal Eagle" and owner of birds and animals.

The concept of "iwa" or owá is central to the traditional Nagô and Egun belief system, where moral values revolve around character. The Nagô and Egun generally agree that morality is summarized in the word "Iwa." Iwalewa is a Nagô proverb that means "**character is beauty.**" The term "Iwa" refers to "**good character.**" The original meaning of "Iwa" can be translated as "**existence.**" Iwa l'ewa, "character is beauty."

E wa wo omo Odu bere

Come and see the children Odu has spread everywhere

Odu lo biwa, Odu lo yawa

Odu is the one that gave birth to us, Odu is the one that produced us

E wa woo mo Odu bere

Come and see the children Odu has spread over the land

Odu lo bi wa ba se po ba won

Odu is the one that gave birth to us

Osa Meji says, "Mother is the Magic." **Àgbàláàgbà Odún.**

Yewájòbí, Yewájòba – "The source of all creation."

Polo Orisha.